Themes for Architecture Success

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Themes for Architecture Success

- Sponsorship
- Decision Making Mindset
- Trust
- Common Goals
Sponsorship

The right sponsors ensure that architects are engaged on the most significant and impactful work, and provide “air cover” for architects.
Common Goals

“We’re rowing as fast as we can!”

Shared values and vision that enable efficient decision-making, reduce churn, and provide consistency
Decision Making Mindset

“It has come to my attention that the building is on fire. Let’s bring in a consultant and see what he recommends.”

A systematic way of thinking about planning, follow-through and risk management to balance quality, value and constraints
Trust

“Sometimes I think the collaborative process would work better without you.”

Trust is enabled by mutual confidence in leaders and colleagues, and consistent and open communication.
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## Improvement Techniques

| Senior leaders champion & involve architects | Ongoing & private dialog with senior leaders
| Business partners & project managers meet architecture expectations & value architecture input | Know your stakeholders’ priorities
| Architecture decisions are frequently followed | Highlight & motivate people towards common goals
| Escalation to non-project leaders when deviating from an architecture decision | Make decisions visible
| Governance is not a roadblock | Be sensitive to the scale of change
| Architects set goals together | Simplify & reduce complexity
| Architects are involved in early visioning, chartering, and business requirements | Break down changes into small steps
| Architects are in the loop | Drive time-to-market improvements
| | Partner with project managers
| | Get involved early to include architecture tasks & estimates
| | Put technical debt on the backlog
| | Streamline governance
| | Invest in people

- Be sensitive to the scale of change
- Simplify & reduce complexity
- Break down changes into small steps
- Drive time-to-market improvements
- Partner with project managers
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Survey Results

- Particularly strong correlations between common goals and the other themes

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# Survey Observations & Interpretations

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<td>• A lot of ad-hoc activity and architecture decisions still stick</td>
<td>• Ad hoc processes are often sufficient, formal processes not always necessary</td>
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| • When architecture decisions don’t stick, it is frequently due to project constraints | • The case for architecture is not fully made  
• Architects are not involved early enough or not communicating effectively |
| • No significant difference among architects in centralized teams vs. not centralized | • Organizational deployment of architects is not a significant issue  
• Architects are attracted to other architects |
| • Strong correlation among all four themes                                | • Doing good/bad at one may have a ripple effect on the other themes                                      |
| • Strongest correlation is with common goals                              | • Driving towards common goals may be the key theme, which will improve others                           |
| • Enterprise & solution architects with higher correlation; application architects, etc. with lower correlation | • Survey questions about organizational behavior and stakeholders, which is typically the focus of EA and SA roles |
Key Takeaways on Themes

- Trust, Sponsorship, Common Goals, and a Decision Making Mindset are required for successful architecture
  - Improving one may have a ripple effect

- Model for assessing you & your environment

- Techniques for improving architecture success:
  - Continuous Stakeholder Communication
  - Translate Strategy to Incremental Steps with Visible Project Successes
  - Get Involved Early and Stay Engaged
  - Invest in People
Key Takeaways on Survey

- Architecture decisions can stick in the absence of formal processes
- When decisions don’t stick, it’s often due to project constraints
- Project managers and business leaders require special focus
- Successful architectures are not always the most technically advanced